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**Supreme Court of Wisconsin**

110 EAST MAIN STREET, SUITE 215

P.O. Box 1688

MADISON, WI 53701-1688

TELEPHONE (608) 266-1880

FACSIMILE (608) 267-0640

Web Site: [www.wicourts.gov](http://www.wicourts.gov)

May 12, 2006

**To:**

Julie M. Falk  
Office of Lawyer Regulation  
110 E. Main Street, Suite 315  
Madison, WI 53703

Carol Kornstedt  
Office of Lawyer Regulation  
110 E. Main Street, Suite 315  
Madison, WI 53703

Ronald E. Langford  
7811 W. Fond du Lac Avenue  
Milwaukee, WI 53218-2604

State Bar of Wisconsin  
P.O. Box 7158  
Madison, WI 53707-7158

You are hereby notified that the Court has entered the following order:

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No. 2006XX179-D

In the Matter of Office of Lawyer Regulation Investigations  
Concerning Ronald E. Langford: OLR v. Langford

The Office of Lawyer Regulation (OLR) filed a notice of motion and motion, as well as a supporting affidavit, seeking the temporary suspension of the license of Attorney Ronald E. Langford to practice law in Wisconsin, pursuant to SCR 22.03(4); this court ordered Attorney Langford to show cause, in writing, by March 13, 2006, why OLR's motion should not be granted. Attorney Langford filed his response acknowledging his delays in responding to the OLR's grievance investigation, but asserting that he had provided information to the best of his ability. On April 11, 2006, the court ordered the OLR to produce copies of certain correspondence referenced in the affidavit in support of its motion. The OLR has produced the correspondence, which the court has reviewed and considered.

On May 9, 2006, the OLR filed with the court a letter reporting that Attorney Langford had been scheduled for an in-person meeting with the OLR staff on May 3, 2006. On that morning, however, Attorney Langford left a voice-mail message stating that he would not be appearing because of a trial scheduled for that day, but promising to call back later that afternoon to reschedule the meeting. The OLR's letter further stated that while it appeared that Attorney Langford did in fact have a trial on May 3, 2006, he had not communicated with the OLR in any way about rescheduling the meeting either on the afternoon of May 3, 2006, or indeed at any time through May 9, 2006. The court notes that this is the third instance in which Attorney Langford has contacted the OLR on the morning of the day of a meeting to inform the OLR that

he would not be appearing due to some circumstance. The fact that this is the third instance of failing to appear and Attorney Langford's subsequent failure to take any action to reschedule the meeting lead to the conclusion that Attorney Langford is willfully failing to cooperate with the OLR, thereby requiring the temporary suspension of his license to practice law in this state.

IT IS ORDERED that the motion is granted. The license of Attorney Langford to practice law is temporarily suspended as of the date of this order and until further notice of this court. He shall further comply with the requirements of SCR 22.26 relating to license suspension if he has not already done so.

PATIENCE D. ROGGENSACK, J. (dissenting). While I can understand the frustration of OLR that Attorney Langford cancelled three meetings with the staff member assigned to investigate grievances against him, with each cancellation occurring on the morning of the meeting, in my view that is an insufficient reason to temporarily suspend Attorney Langford's license to practice law. Cancelling meetings is insufficient in this case for three reasons. First, OLR does not assert that Attorney Langford has not been truthful in his reasons for not appearing. On one occasion he explained that due to his mother's health, he was required to be with her. On another occasion, he had a trial, which OLR confirmed was a truthful representation. He has also explained that he did not have the money to come to Madison at the scheduled time, but he hoped he would at a later date. Second, it is unclear why meetings are repeatedly scheduled in Madison when Attorney Langford lives in Milwaukee and has had repeated problems getting to Madison. Third, Attorney Langford has substantially complied with all written requests from OLR; and therefore, has not ignored OLR's investigation. Ignoring an OLR investigation is the usual reason we temporarily suspend an attorney's license to practice.

In regard to Attorney Langford's responses to OLR's requests for information, I reviewed OLR staff letter of August 15, 2005, OLR's follow-up letter dated October 17, 2005 (grievance of D.S.), and Attorney Langford's response dated November 9, 2005, wherein he answered the questions posed on August 15, 2005, and provided a signed, written retainer agreement and receipt for cash received that was requested by OLR. I reviewed OLR staff letter of August 30, 2005 (grievance of T. R.) and Attorney Langford's response dated November 9, 2005, wherein he answered the questions posed on August 30, 2005, and provided a receipt for the initial client payment. I reviewed OLR staff letter dated October 17, 2005 (grievance of A.C.) and Attorney Langford's response dated November 9, 2005, wherein he answered the question posed by OLR on October 17, 2005, and attached copies of the billing records OLR requested, which showed the dates of service, time expended and service provided. And finally, I reviewed Attorney Langford's letter of September 22, 2005 (grievance of N.M.), wherein he answered numerous questions and provided correspondence. I was not provided with the OLR letter to which

Page Three  
May 12, 2006  
No. 2006XX179-D

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Attorney Langford's letter of September 22, 2005 responds so I did not compare the responses with the information requested. However, I did review OLR staff letter of November 17, 2005 relative to the N.M. grievance, which letter requested information in addition to that provided by Attorney Langford on September 22, 2005.

The work of OLR is extremely important and there are times when OLR's requests for information are ignored. When that occurs, the only way to assure compliance with OLR's requests is to suspend an attorney's license to practice law. However, when we do so, we take away that attorney's ability to support himself and to complete the tasks for clients that he has agreed to undertake. Therefore, a temporary suspension should be employed only as a last resort. In the case before us, Attorney Langford has repeatedly responded with information and documents that OLR has requested. He has also explained that he is having financial difficulties and meeting in Madison is a hardship for him. Accordingly, I would either set a meeting in Milwaukee at a time and date that is convenient to both OLR and Attorney Langford in order to secure whatever information OLR believes is necessary to make its initial decision on the grievances or I would refer the grievances to a Milwaukee district committee to proceed upon the investigation. Therefore, because I conclude that there are other options available to OLR for further investigation, I respectfully dissent from the order temporarily suspending Attorney Langford's license to practice law.

Butler, J., did not participate.

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*Cornelia G. Clark*  
*Clerk of Supreme Court*